

FROM

STATE ASSEMBLYMAN

**MIKE BRIGGS**

29<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

Fresno/Tulare Counties



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## AGRICULTURAL UPDATE

Agriculture is a key issue in the 29<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, and I'm happy to report that a number of my agricultural bills passed the State Legislature and were signed by the Governor. The following bills deal with a number of important issues, including produce labeling and new tools for estimating the citrus harvest.

### Produce Labeling

Assembly Bill 1512 is known as the Agriculture Labeling bill and it requires growers and shippers to properly label agricultural produce. The legislation passed the Legislature and has been signed into law by Governor Davis. It prohibits the reuse of Ag shipping containers, unless old company logos have been completely obliterated. **This law does not affect containers used at Farmer's Markets.**

### Reason For Change

Consumers are often misled by labels which claim the contents of a box of produce are from a particular producer when, in fact, they are not. Consumers, who buy a box of produce with a Central Valley label, should know they are getting the highest quality of produce from the Central Valley.

### A Successful Orange Count

Counting oranges is serious business to citrus growers. AB 1435, known as the Orange Crop Advisory bill, gives the Department of Food and Agriculture a new and valuable tool for acreage surveys and crop estimation efforts. It has also been chaptered into law after receiving the Governor's signature.

### Consumers Win

AB 1435 is designed to ensure a smooth and even supply of citrus to the consumer. Unlike other Ag products, most citrus is stored on the tree until it is harvested for sale. The crop estimation data will aid in the timing of that citrus harvest and sale of the product.

### Combating the Bad Weed

AB 1168 from Assemblyman Peter Frusetta sets up an aggressive statewide noxious weed abatement program through the CDFA to stop the spread of several species of noxious weeds in California.

Examples of noxious weeds include the Morning Glory, Cocklebur, Thistle (a big problem in Fresno County) and the Puncturevine. These weeds are described as noxious because they are hard to kill and pose serious economic, social and ecological problems. It also

### New Money for New Water Storage

New water storage facilities like reservoirs and lakes require the construction of new dams. I recently withheld support for a massive water bond that had no plans for new water storage facilities. I only agreed to support the issue, when Governor Davis agreed to fund \$20 million worth of new water storage studies in the next fiscal year.

has been signed into law.

### The Mighty Grape

AB 1582 from Assemblyman Dean Florez creates a mandatory reporting process for the annual Grape Crush Report. This report is important to growers, vintners and lending institutions because they use the information to analyze trends and make informed decisions about what varieties to grow. It passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor.

### Not All Agree

A processor in Modesto, Fruit Tech, has refused to submit information regarding grape concentrate, spawning the need for this law. The language exempts processors from any criminal penalty for failure to comply with the bill, but creates penalties such as license revocation and fines for those processors who continue to hold out.